

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-10 OMB-01 ACDA-10 SAJ-01

SAM-01 SAB-01 AID-05 /081 W
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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8818

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION USUN

UNCLAS CAIRO 13020

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR EG XF

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN PRESS TREATMENT OF SINAI EARLY-WARNING STATION
DISPUTE

1. LOCAL PRESS DECEMBER 29 CARRIES FRONT-PAGE ARTICLES ON EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI DISPUTE OVER EGYPTIAN EARLY-WARNING STATION IN SINAI. AHRAH, WITH MOST COMPLETE COVERAGE, STATES THAT DISPUTE INVOLVES BOTH LOCATION AND SIZE OF EGYPTIAN INSTALLATION, BUT CITES UN SOURCES IN JERUSALEM TO EFFECT THAT DISPUTE NOT LIKELY TO DELAY FINAL IMPLEMENTATION OF SINAI AGREEMENT. ACCORDING TO AHRAH, EGYPTIANS REJECT 1.2 SQUARE MILE INSTALLATION AND DEMAND 2.3 SQUARE MILES ALLOTTED TO ISRAELI STATION. IN ADDITION, AHRAH STATES THAT EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI MAPS DIFFER ON LOCATION OF EGYPTIAN STATION: ISRAELI MAPS PUT SITE ON TOP OF 2,160 FOOT MOUNTAIN, WHILE EGYPTIAN MAPS CALL FOR LOCATION APPROXIMATELY ONE-HALF MILE FARTHER EAST, WITH MUCH SUPERIOR VANTAGE POINT OVER ISRAELI FORCES IN SINAI.

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2. AHAM, HOWEVER, FAILS TO MENTION THAT JOINT ISRAELI EGYPTIAN COMMISSION TO MEET DECEMBER 29 TO ATTEMPT TO IRON OUT DIFFERENCES AND ONLY MENTIONS "INTERNATION MEDIATION" AS EXIT FROM IMPASSE. BOTH AKHBAR AND HUMHURIYYA, HOWEVER, REFER TO MEETING OF JOINT COMMISSION AT KILOMETER 512 (BALUTA-QANTARA ROAD) TO RESOLVE DISPUTE. GUMHURIYYA STATES THAT GENERAL SIILASVUO CALLED FOR MEETING OF JOINT COMMISSION, BUT ONLY MENTIONS THAT SIZE OF EGYPTIAN INSTALLATION UNDER DISCUSSION, ALTHOUGH ISRAELI MILITARY SPOKESMAN ALSO CITED, COMMENTING THAT "SEVERAL" ISSUES UNDER DISPUTE. SHORT AKHBAR ARTICLE MERELY COMMENTS THAT DISPUTE MAINLY OVER LACATION OF EGYPTIAN STATION TO BE RESOLVED BY MEETING OF EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI MILITARY EXPERTS.

3. COMMENT: THIS IS FIRST INDICATION IN CAIRO PRESS THAT ISSUES REMAIN UNRESOLVED CONCERNING EARLY-WARNING STATION AND THAT EGYPTIANS SEEKING MODIFICATIONS IN SINAI ACCORD. OMISSION BY AHAM OF FACT THAT EGYPTIANS AND ISRAELIS MEETING TO RESOLVE EARLY-WARNING PROBLEMS TYPICAL OF MOST PAST REPORTING OF WITHDRAWAL IMPLEMENTATIONS. AKHBAR AND HUMHURIYYA MENTION OF EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI JOINT COMMISSION LOW-KEY AND WITHOUT FURTHER COMMENT.
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